

## Hobbies

# Taking laughs out of funny money

By Roger Boye

New \$20 bills with enhanced anti-counterfeiting devices will make their debut by this summer, the third currency denomination to get a facelift.

The series 1990 "greenbacks" will feature microprinting around the center portrait and a polyester thread embedded into the paper, additions designed to make the bills difficult to duplicate accurately on computer-based printing equipment.

During May, Federal Reserve banks probably will receive millions of the new \$20s from the U.S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Those bills gradually will enter circulation through commercial banks and other financial institutions, replacing notes worn from use. (The \$20 bill has a "life expectancy" of four years.)

New \$100 notes began circulating in 1991 and the enhanced \$50s followed earlier this year. A government statement issued last summer suggested that the \$20s might not be ready until the end

of 1992, but a Treasury spokesperson said recently that production is going full speed ahead.

The polyester thread runs vertically through each \$20 bill, about 1½ inches to the left of Andrew Jackson's portrait. Printing on the thread ("USA 20") can be seen if the bill is held to a light.

By the mid-1990s, all types of freshly printed Federal Reserve notes—except the \$1 denomination—will include the new devices. Uncle Sam will not recall money already in circulation.



Just weeks after boosting the price of proof sets, the United States Mint has announced that sets of uncirculated coins also will cost more.

Starting July 1, the government will charge \$8, up from \$7, for a 1992 uncirculated coin set. It contains \$1.82 worth of hard money—the five basic coin types from both the Philadelphia and Denver mints.

For an order form, write to the mint's Customer Service Center, 10001 Aerospace Drive, Lanham, Md. 20706, or call 301-436-7400.

Uncirculated coin sets have cost \$7 since 1984.

The price of a proof set will go from \$11 to \$12.50 on July 1, an increase that garnered the editorial ire of Numismatic News. The newspaper called on the mint "to re-examine its pricing policies for all collector products..."



Two scenes of Yosemite National Park and John Muir's words "Climb the mountains and get their good tidings" are featured on a new medal being sold by Uncle Sam.

The collectible—authorized by a federal law—honors Yosemite's 1990 centennial. Two dollars from the sale of each medal will help fund trail development and the preservation of sequoia groves within the park.

To order a medal, send a check to the United States Mint, Order Processing Branch, 10001 Aerospace Drive, Lanham, Md. 20706. A three-inch bronze medal costs \$23 and the 1½ inch bronze medal—which has a much smaller surface area—costs \$4.25.